

SPOTLIGHT

ON Kate Donohoe



What do you do for St Michael's? Apart from attending Worship... I am part of the Benefice team at St Michael's, responsible for getting the communications of all events and services out into the community as well as helping to organise events. I compose Together News and look after things like our website. It's been a big undertaking this year, making sure everyone knows what is going on 'online' when we have had to change our plans at a moment's notice, following announcements from from Prime Minister.

I am also a member of St Michael's PCC and we have an exciting year ahead, supporting the plans to repair and upgrade the flooring.

What made you want to help? My background was the corporate world. In my last role I was responsible for the marketing of De'Longhi as Brand Marketing Manager and I decided to leave 'that world' behind me when my first born arrived, Austin. I had always intended to return but once that little man was in our lives, I couldn't imagine leaving him with anyone else. Little Austin wasn't an easy baby and I had a very heavy weight on my shoulders when I was in 'the old life'. I would sit looking at the laptop thinking however wonderful the 'coffee machine' was, I wasn't ever doing anything to support my community and the bigger picture, (something I was eager to do). It wasn't fulfilling for me at all and I knew something would come up that would be better for my soul.

I had been praying for an opportunity in our local community. I love working and being with people and my skillset lies in marketing and communications. I grew up in a Catholic household, going to a Catholic all-girls school but chose to be Christened into the Church of England in my early 20's. Could a role using my marketing skills in our community, supporting peoples faith ever come up in Lyndhurst? (It felt like a tall order)! So my prayers really were truly answered when a friend mentioned this role had come up and the Benefice were looking for someone to join them, to be responsible for communications.

What do you enjoy most about supporting the Benefice? Not only do I get to use my skillset but I get to work with so many different, wonderful people across the Benefice, helping to share the love and work of God.

What do you do when you're not helping out at church? I am a mum and a wife... we have two beautiful sons. Austin, age 8 and Quentin, age 3. We have no family nearby and Ross works in Poole, having very long days so I 'hold the fort' largely at home. My days are spent running around after them, driving them to and from school/preschool in Brockenhurst, cooking what feels like 99999 meals a week and 'trying' (not always winning) to look after our home.

I absolutely love to cook and bake - I'm Vegan and have been for over 20 months so learning new recipes and ways of cooking has been a learning curve... a fun one.

We love to see friends and meet for food and drinks but there has been very little of that this year.

What things would you like to see happen, in light of the changes from COVID this year? We (at the Benefice Office) had to quickly jump into action to make changes to keep in touch with everyone and I think (and hope) that Together News is enjoyable and useful to everyone, along with the weekly email news updates. One of the first things I noticed when I first joined was the amount of printing and paper we used. Using digital media to keep in touch I believe is the way forward and it's not only a cost saving but means we can personally and quickly contact people rather than relying on handouts when people come to Church.

I also loved the opportunity to join the Alpha group on Zoom. Usually joining evening groups are tricky for me with our little ones bedtimes so having the flexibility to hop onto a Zoom was wonderful. I hope there is a 'Zoom' option for prayer groups going forward.